

TELFORD & WREKIN COUNCIL
AUDIT COMMITTEE: 20th September 2011.

Customer Feedback Performance Report (Compliments/Complaints/FOI's) 1st April 2010 to 31st March 2011

REPORT OF : Angie Astley, Head of Customer, Leisure and Libraries

1. SUMMARY FOR THE PERIOD 1ST APRIL 2010 TO 31ST March 2011

- 1.1 The majority of the **575** compliments were addressed to our front line services, particularly those in Environmental Services, Adult Social Care Services, Leisure, Libraries & Customer Services.
- 1.2 For this period we received **800** corporate complaints, with the key areas being detailed in Section.3. of this report. **495 (62%)** of these complaints had elements of the concerns upheld. **639 (80%)** were responded to within 10 working days against a target set at the beginning of the year of **83%**.
- 1.3 For this period we received **126** statutory adult and child care complaints. **50** for Adult Services and **76** for Children Services.
- 26 (52%)** of Adult statutory complaints had elements upheld. The majority that processed through the complaints procedure were responded to within timescales agreed with customers.
- 41 (53%)** of Child statutory complaints had elements upheld. **27(35%)** were responded to within the 10 working day timescale.
- 1.4 The Council received **709** Freedom of Information (FOI) requests, **92** Data Protection (DP) requests and **22** Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) requests.
- 555 (78%)** FOI's were responded to within 20 working days. Of the 83 data protection request due for response in this period **62(75%)** were responded to within 40 days. Of the 22 EIR's due **14(64%)** were responded to within 20 working days. Details of the performance of each Service Area is contained in Appendix A.
- 1.5 For this period we received **274** Member enquiries, **171** MP enquiries and **258** Parish enquiries received via the Parish hotline. We responded to **231 (84%)** of Member enquiries, **127(75%)** of MP enquiries and **204 (79%)** of Parish enquires within 10 working days.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 To note the information within this report

SUMMARY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

COMMUNITY IMPACT	Do these proposals contribute to specific Priority Plan objective(s)?	
	Yes	The information within this report impacts on all council priorities.
	Will the proposals impact on specific groups of people?	
	No	The Corporate and Statutory feedback procedure is open to all customers..
FINANCIAL/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPACT	No	The costs associated with administering the complaints process is in the form of officer time. This is met from within existing budgets.
LEGAL ISSUES	No	There are no direct legal implications arising from this report, however compliance with the Freedom of Information Act 2000 , the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Statutory complaints procedure are legal requirements
OTHER IMPACTS, RISKS & OPPORTUNITIES	Yes	The council's robust feedback mechanisms support the council to maintain its reputation by being responsive to our customers concerns and implementing service improvements as appropriate.
IMPACT ON SPECIFIC WARDS	No	No impacts but comments received from across the borough

3. INFORMATION

- 3.1 Detailed below are the key areas of customer complaints for this period. It should be acknowledged that there are relatively small numbers of complaints registered compared to the number of services provided by the Council on a daily basis. Analysis has indicated that on the whole, when customers do complain, there are elements where improvements could be made. The subsequent responses from the council show our willingness to make those improvements whether they are for the benefit of the individual or in some cases across the service as a whole.
- 3.2 **Refuse and Kerbside** received 136 complaints from the 68,000 properties (or 3.5m collections) that we are responsible for each year. Of those 107(78%) had elements upheld and were mainly about missed collections or bins/boxes not being put back. This information will continue to be used in monitoring the contract with TWS. During the extreme cold weather period 29th November 2010 to 14th January 2011 79 complaints regarding the Refuse and Recycling service were received compared to just 26 the previous year during the same period.
- 3.3 **Council Tax** received 80 complaints out of a possible 68,000 properties . 46 (57%) had elements upheld and were mainly about incorrect billing and comments around better communication.
- 3.4 **Leisure Services** received 50 complaints, from a possible 1.1 million customers who visit Leisure Services each year of which 41(83%) had elements upheld. The complaints in the main were around the poor state of some of our facilities eg changing rooms, and other concerns were in relation to changes to fitness class times.
- 3.5 **Looked after children in care** received 37 complaints of which 20 (54%) had elements upheld. The majority related to contact arrangements and being unhappy with decisions made. There are approximately 270 children and young people currently looked after at present.
- 3.6 **Traffic Management** received 32 complaints of which 14(43%) had elements upheld. The majority related to parking issues and concerns around traffic calming.

- 3.7 **Parks and Open spaces** received 27 complaints, 16 (59%) of which were upheld. The majority related to repair and maintenance issues.
- 3.8 **Corporate Contact Centre** received 25 complaints, from 136,000 customer enquiries dealt with each year of which 15 (60%) had elements upheld. The majority were about waiting times.
- 3.9 **Planning** received 23 complaints of which 10(43%) had elements upheld. The majority related to issues with planning applications.
- 3.10 **Benefits** received 23 complaints from the 19,000 current live benefit claims. These mainly relate to decisions made and records not being updated correctly. Of those 11 (48%) had elements upheld and individual remedial action was taken in each case.
- 3.11 **Safeguarding** received 16 complaints, 9 (56%) of which were upheld. The majority centred around lack of support and information.

4. **SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS**

4.1 **Service Improvements**

The majority of customer feedback received during this period was responded to on an individual basis, with limited trends identifying any need to implement service wide improvements or changes to council policy. However detailed below are some of the improvements made as a result of customer feedback;

4.1.1 **Safeguarding Services**

- Improvements to co-ordination and planning of placement moves for large sibling groups
- Improved quality of Care Plans for Court
- When temporary line management arrangements need to be made, timescales, responsibilities and handover are confirmed in writing.
- Introduction of random file audits happening regularly
- Quality Assurance and Dispute resolution procedure regarding handling of cases developed

4.1.2 **Leisure**

- A major Capital Investment into a brand new Leisure Centre and Library at Wellington has been prioritised and will be opening later this year and along with a new Leisure facility at Abraham Darby planned to Spring next year. This will bring about much improved leisure facilities and changing areas and will redress some of the complaints about current tired leisure facilities. Other recent improvements have been made to Newport pool to replace the roof which was leaking heavily and affecting our customers experience.
- Additional aerobic sessions have been put on to meet customer demand for classes also redressing complaints.

4.1.3 **Environmental Services**

- Environmental Services are currently rationalising the number of Customer Contact IT systems As part of these developments, all 'customer' processes have been reviewed and redesigned to ensure we deliver a positive customer experience and effective communication. The service area website pages have also been reviewed and redesigned to ensure accurate information is available and 'online' applications for certain services now available.

4.1.4 Refuse and Recycling

- A number of initiatives were employed during the cold weather snap in 2010 to reduce service disruption and customer complaints. These included suspension of the Green bin collections and redirection of the crews to collect refuse. Additional kerbside collection vehicles were sourced and utilised, and resources from our cleansing teams were diverted to collection duties. Service operating times were extended during this period including weekend working and in order to speed up the kerbside collection a temporary bulking station was set up at the Hill Lane compound, Madeley. This ensured that collection vehicles were unloaded quickly and efficiently to maximise collection time. Learning from this experience, the Waste team are currently revising the winter collection policy to ensure that customers are clear on collection priorities during periods of snow and ice in 2011/12. The New policy will be publicised via the website, the Refuse and Recycling Calendars and 'snowline'.

Report prepared by Helen Ward, Customer Quality Manager, 01952 382507

Top 10 areas of Complaint

Service	No. Of Complaints	% with elements upheld
Refuse and Kerbside	136	107 (78%)
Council Tax	80	46 (57%)
Leisure Services	50	41 (82%)
Looked after children	37	20 (54%)
Traffic Management	32	14 (43%)
Parks and Open Spaces	27	16 (59%)
Corporate Contact Centre	25	15 (60%)
Planning	23	10 (43%)
Benefits	23	11 (48%)
Safeguarding	16	9 (56%)

Response Performance For Each Service Area

Service Delivery Unit	Complaints Target 83% responded to in 10 working days	Complaints Partly / Fully Upheld	FOI / EIR target 85% responded to within 20 working days	DP target 86% responded to within 40 days
Economy & Skills	50% (2)	50% (1) Upheld	100% (1)	Zero Rc'd
Governance	60% (11Rc'd;10 due)	10% (1) upheld 20% (2) partly upheld	80% (51 Rc'd;50 due)	Zero Rc'd
Environmental Services	80% (372)	32% (119) partly upheld 32% (118) Upheld	82% (110 Rc'd;107 due)	100% (2)
Housing & Planning	54% (98)	10% (10) Upheld 23% (23) Partly upheld	75% (108)	80% (5)
Property & ICT	92% (12)	25% (3) Upheld 25% (3) Partly upheld	83% (54)	Zero Rc'd
Customer, Leisure & Libraries	91% (255)	31% (79) Partly upheld 34% (86) Upheld	93% (94)	96% (22)
Finance	33% (6)	17% (1) upheld 0 partly upheld	81% (57)	100% (1)
Care & Support (Adults & Children)	57% (7)	57% (4) upheld 14% (1) partly upheld	83% (31)	64% (11 due)
Family & Community Services	78% (9)	22% (2) upheld 22% (2) partly upheld	90% (29)	100% (5 due)
Safeguarding (Adults & Children)	33% (6)	17% (1) upheld 33% (2) partly upheld	63% (41)	56% (25 due)
School Improvement	71% (7)	71% (5) upheld 14% (1) partly upheld	86% (21)	67% (3)

Assistant Chief Executive	100% (2)	100% Partly Upheld	93% (30)	Zero
Corporate Director	Zero Rc'd	N/A	79% (63)	100% (3)
Cross Delivery Units (joint responses)	50% (4)	50% (2) Partly upheld 25% (1) upheld	62% (37)	100% (3)